

111.

AN
ORATION
IN CELEBRATION OF
THE 71st. ANNIVERSARY
OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE;

DELIVERED IN THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
COLUMBIA, S. C.

BY
CAMPBELL R. BRYCE.

COLUMBIA, S. C.
PRINTED BY A. S. JOHNSTON,
1847.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Extract from the proceedings of Council, held on the 10th July, instant.

On motion, the following was unanimously adopted.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Town Council be tendered to C. R. BRYCE, Esq. for the very eloquent and patriotic oration delivered by him on the 4th July, and that the Intendant be directed to ask a copy for publication.

A true copy from minutes of Council.

I. H. SMITH, T. C.

Columbia, S. C. }
July 12th 1847. }

My Dear Sir:—I am happy in having been made the organ to communicate to you the above Resolution of the Town Council: and in transmitting it to you, cannot do less than add, that your compliance would afford me, individually, very great pleasure.

With much regard, your ob'dt. servant,

EDWARD SILL, Intendant.

C. R. BRYCE, Esq.

July 12, 1847.

Dear Sir:—I was favored to-day with your polite note, covering a resolution of the Town Council, tendering me their thanks for the oration which I had the honor of delivering by their appointment, and authorizing you to ask a copy for publication.

Gratefully appreciating the partiality and kindness which has bestowed upon my effort this undeserved compliment, and disclaiming for it the credit of any originality or any merit, other than that of condensing into a short and easy view, some of the leading elements of our national growth and happiness, hastily thrown together from a reference to our several historical authorities, but hoping that in this aspect it may not be altogether devoid of interest or usefulness, I respectfully place it at the disposal of the Council.

Thanking you for your individual expression of satisfaction in the communication of this compliment, I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

CAMPBELL R. BRYCE.

Hon. EDWARD SILL, Intendant.

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ORATION.

IT is becoming, Fellow-Citizens, in a free and intelligent people to perpetuate the observance of their political Sabbath—to mark its recurrence with some more honorable regard than an indulgence in mere pastimes and festivities. We owe it to those who achieved our liberties gratefully to remember and commemorate their sufferings and their services. We owe it to ourselves to examine and appreciate the value and extent of those liberties. We owe it to posterity to consider and devise the means for their transmission and perpetuity.

The limits of an annual oration may not afford scope, nor the talents of the orator afford capacity, for doing approximative justice to even one of the important topics into which this great subject divides itself;—but the time will not be mis-spent nor his labor altogether in vain if he should succeed in quickening the hearts of his hearers with one more throb of admiration for the free institutions under which we live, or direct their minds to the contemplation and study of any of those great principles upon which they are based.

It is true, that this day, commemorative of the formal Act of Independence, does stand out as the prominent point in our progress towards the height of political liberty upon which we now proudly and triumphantly stand; and embalmed as it is in our hearts by the remembrance of so much that was exalted in virtue, that was brilliant in intellect, that was splendid in achievement, that was heroic in suffering, with which it was immediately surrounded and is now associated, it presents itself to us as the most

natural as well as commanding position for surveying that long and toilsome and bloody tract over which preceding generations have had to pass in their ascent to freedom, as it also affords us a bright and wide-spread prospect of that glory and happiness which we confidently trust await us and our posterity in the future. But it is only in its connection with the principles which led to this illustrious event, and the happy results which have followed in its train, that it possesses for us now any real or substantial interest or importance beyond those of a merely historical character.

The name of a republic and the idea of liberty may catch the eye and dazzle the imagination of a superficial reader of ancient history; but unless we are taken with empty names and misled by unmeaning terms, it is only in modern times that we will discover any just notions of liberty to be entertained or any stable form of free government to have been established. As vague as were the speculations of the ancients upon religious subjects, such as the existence and character of the Deity, the immortality of the soul and a future retribution,—and as inefficient as these were for the regulation of human conduct, just so crude and useless for all the practical purposes of society were their political theories and their forms of government, however they may have been dignified with the imposing and deceptive appellations of Democracy, Republic or Commonwealth. There never has existed a more unrestrained tyranny over the lives, the fortunes or the actions of a people than grew up in Athens under the guise of Democracy, and under the auspices of a people who claimed for themselves the high prerogative of self-government, nor has ever a wilder or more relentless despot ruled the destinies of a nation than the Athenian demagogue, swaying this corrupt people to every extreme of injustice, cruelty and oppression by his sophistry, his hypocrisy or his impudence. Instead of subserving the great end and object of all society and government, in the protection of the individual in the enjoyment of life and property and the pursuit of happiness, the rich were robbed that the poor might be corrupted. To be virtuous was to be suspected,—to be great or

successful, was to be thrown into exile by the ostracism or suffer death at the hands of an infuriated populace.

The perpetual struggles in Rome of the Plebeians with the Patricians for personal liberty and civic and political equality until the time of the Licinian Laws, and the subsequent conflicts between the wealthy and the poorer classes, are sufficient to show how widely, even in the plenitude of their power and extension, and in the height and majesty of that genius which has left its impress on the laws and institutions of succeeding ages, this illustrious people misconceived and perverted the true and permanent basis and scope and end of Government.

From those ancient times well nigh unto our own, the history of the world presents us one unbroken series of misrule and misgovernment, of cruelty and oppression, of injustice and inequality—tantalizing mankind perhaps by some transient gleam of liberty in the fierce, but short-lived struggle of a nation for its freedom, only to shroud them in gloom and depress them into hopelessness by the impotence of its efforts, or the fatal ignorance or infatuation in which it would so soon relapse under the yoke it had thrown off, or submit itself to some other not less galling and oppressive. And should it be asked whether we too may not be deceived by names and forms, and flatter ourselves into false congratulations upon the imaginary blessings of free government, let the shouts of near twenty millions of people now reverberating across a whole continent be the answer—let the swelling tide of population and wealth and intelligence and virtue rolling from our Atlantic to our Pacific Coast, from Maine and from Florida to Oregon and California, be the answer—but what is more significant and more immediately to our purpose than all this, let the experience and consciousness and inward testimony of every individual citizen of this republic, to the almost absolute freedom of mind and person and property which he enjoys, be the answer.

What principle is it, then, that constitutes our Philosophers-stone of politics, refining the elements of society, purifying the disorders of government, and gilding our institutions with wealth and happiness?

Who is the sage, gifted above his fellows, to whose favored vision it was permitted to pierce the profound chaos in which mankind had been so long enveloped, and discover this "New World" of civil and religious liberty?

Upon what auspicious morn did this flood of American freedom pour itself out upon the extent of this broad and happy land?

The day we celebrate constitutes a link, precious and priceless, from the tears and blood and suffering in which it was wrought, but still a single link in that great chain of events and principles, to which our present political happiness is anchored, and with which our brightest and fondest expectations in the future are bound up.

The illustrious patriots and statesmen of that day, did not felicitate themselves upon the intuitive discovery of any new principles of legislation or government, but justified the step of declaring their Independence by a reference to such as they conceived to be of long standing and well-established. And the important principle of "representation for taxation," the prominent one in this memorable contest, forms now but a single article in the enlarged and comprehensive creed of our modern school of politics.

It is to the introduction of the Christian Religion, and the diffusion of its principles among men, that society owes its longest and most regular impulse towards liberty and equality, and to which it is indebted for those elements of social and political happiness, the want of which constituted the irremediable vacuum of ancient Government—Not that its disciples were encouraged, even in any subordinate degree, to strike at or overturn the prevailing systems of government, but that its second great commandment, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," inculcated that humanity, and infused those principles of fraternity and sympathy between man and man, upon which the political doctrine of equality of rights and privileges must now repose, as well for its reasonableness, as for its greatest security. It is not to be denied that the practice of this second great precept, and the operation of these principles which spring out of it, have long and seriously been mistaken or modified or retarded, in very much the same

proportion, that the first and higher one has been neglected or obscured or perverted, by the weakness or wickedness of men; and the progress of liberty, therefore, like that of religion, has been irregular, partial and incomplete. But we confidently appeal to the testimony of all modern history, as well as our own observation at the present day, to show that wherever the precepts of the Christian religion are most generally read and understood, and its spirit most deeply imbued and exhibited among a people, there also will be found the greatest amount of rational freedom, irrespective, to a considerable extent, of the name or the form of the government, by which they may be characterized. By cultivating the spirit of peace, Christianity withdrew men at once from the practice of those cruel exercises and arts which looked directly to the destruction of life, and the violation of the person, and diverted their minds from the demoralizing scenes of violence and war in which all sense of justice, whether public or private, is inevitably swallowed up. This change which it wrought in the habits and occupations of men, under the example of its early tent-makers and fishermen, and the Apostolic injunction to "provide things honest in the sight of men," dignified and consecrated the industrial arts, made labor honorable, as it also became more necessary, and thus introduced another humanizing agent into the social state; one comparatively unknown, or at all events, very much restricted in the ancient world.

Thus, commerce, with her attendant arts, was made to lend its influence in softening down those asperities and inequalities of country, religion and caste, which crept into all society from the patriarchal state, and which interposed the most insuperable obstacles in the way of equality, even in the most democratic communities. In Athens, the only persons admitted to the rights of citizenship were such as were born of parents, both of whom were citizens; and Plutarch abounds with instances of the factitious advantages of birth and family in securing a preponderating influence in the government, for those who possessed them. As her vicinity, however, to the harbor of the Piræus gave her commercial advantages over the other states of Greece,

so could she boast a more democratic form of government; and throughout all history, from the remote experience of Tyre and Sydonia down to that of Great Britain and the United States, commerce will appear to have been in some degree the hand-maid and nurse of civil liberty.

The influence of the feudal system corrected another great error common to all early governments, which was, that the citizen existed only for the government—and under which principle he was its slave. From his infancy he was subject to its inquisitorial scrutiny and power. If, at his birth, he presented marks of a feeble constitution or any physical infirmity which would impair his efficiency in the future service of the State, he fell a sacrifice to the inexorable principle of state convenience. In after life, all his private interests were made to bend to the supposed interest of the State; he could not marry, rear his children, engage in business, nor hold property, except at its capricious dictation. But the establishment of the feudal relations of lord and vassal, however they may appear, at first sight, to have provided for a fixed and arbitrary inequality, contained, in fact, a germ of liberty, which soon bore its fruits in all the ramifications of society. While the feudal charters exacted certain aids and services from the vassal, they strictly defined their nature and number, guaranteed him an exemption from every other, not expressly stipulated for, and bound the lord to him in return for his protection and defence. The true objects and advantages of government began to be perceived, and the true principle that government should exist for the benefit of the governed, began to be developed.

A profound political writer of the present day remarks, "that history does not mention a single great event occurring within the last seven hundred years, which has not turned to the advantage of equality. The crusades," he goes on to say, "and the wars of the English, decimated the nobles and divided their possessions; the erection of communes introduced an element of democratic liberty into the bosom of feudal monarchy—the invention of fire arms equalized the peasant and the noble on the field of battle—printing opened the sources of knowledge to all

classes of men—the post brought the same information to the cottage and the palace—Protestantism proclaimed that all men were alike able to find the road to Heaven, and the discovery of America offered a thousand new paths to fortune, and placed riches and power within the reach of the adventurous and obscure.”

From these general causes, along with others of a more particular or local character, sprung up, in England, the body of the common law, with its great bulwarks of trial by jury, magna charta, the Bill of rights, and the Habeas corpus Act; and imbued with the spirit of these laws of liberty, the early colonists of America, flying from the religious persecutions of the times, sought an asylum in the primeval forests of the new world.

Suffering all the hardships of a pioneer life in a savage wilderness, remote from civilization, pressed upon by hostile tribes of Indians, and exposed to occasional aggressions from foreign enemies, receiving only such stinted aid from the parent country as her own passing or pressing interests imperiously demanded, they nevertheless opened up before them by their industry, intelligence and piety, a prospect of considerable advancement in social and political happiness. For one hundred and fifty years, the indolence or indifference of the British Government, or the civil wars with which it was occupied, abandoned the colonies to their own destiny, and left them free to pursue that tendency to liberty which accompanied them from the old world, and which found so many favorable circumstances for its development in the new. In an evil hour for Great Britain, but a fortunate one for us and for mankind, its ministry conceived the idea of subjecting the growing prosperity of the Colonies to the support of its own enormous expenses by a new, unequal and unjust system of legislation, attempting to regulate, by authority of Parliament, their internal polity, and impose taxes upon them without their concurrence or consent. From a sense of some small obligation to Great Britain as the Mother country, the Colonies had generously yielded to her the entire monopoly of their foreign trade, and from motives of convenience, had accorded to Parliament a general superintendence and le-

gislation over them, but they saw clearly that its assumption of the power to tax them at its own pleasure or necessity, and in its own discretion, was an abrogation of their ancient privileges, and would reduce them into the mere puppets of a legislative body, cut off by distance from such a knowledge of their condition and circumstances as would enable it to execute fairly the very power it assumed and such identity or sympathy with them as would restrain the natural tendency to an excessive exercise of that power. Ardentlly attached to the mother country by the ties of descent, kindred, language, laws, religion and intercourse, the Colonists, in their opposition to its authority, only proposed to themselves the resistance of a principle which once admitted in theory and carried out in practice, would have opened upon them a flood of partial and unjust legislation,—would have made them mere tributaries of Great Britain instead of equal subjects,—would have impoverished their resources, and finally engulfed their liberties by a successive tide of tyranny to which they could afterwards oppose no constitutional objection.

It was not, therefore, that some other political head should be substituted for a scion of the house of Brunswick, or that some other political body should succeed to the ancient functions of the British Parliament, that the patriots of the Revolution, appealing to the God of battles for the justice of their cause, pledged to each other their lives and fortunes and sacred honor in that day of trial and of blood, that fearful day,

“ When every form of death and every woe
Shot from malignant stars to earth below,
When murder bared her arm and rampant war
Yoked the red dragons of her iron car.”

But it was that they and their children should be admitted to an equal participation of God's bounty to man ; that they, too, should enter upon the fair heritage of religion and honor, of science and art, of peace and plenty which he had spread out before them ; that under their responsibilities to him for the enjoyment and improvement of these inestimable gifts, they and their posterity should be free to seek their own true and substantial happiness in the forms

and principles of a conscientious and enlightened self-government.

Mr. Burke, in his speech on conciliation with America, espousing our quarrel with the Parliament, enumerates the following capital sources from which the fierce spirit of liberty had grown up among the colonists. First, their *English descent*, which, besides securing for them those great bulwarks of British liberty already referred to, had also transmitted to them as a common inheritance all the knowledge and experience upon this very power of taxing which had been elicited by their common ancestors in their constitutional struggles for freedom. Next, their *forms and habits of self-government*, forced upon them in the first instance by the neglect of the British Government, but which soon inspired them with lofty sentiments, as they also enlightened them with large and liberal ideas upon the *rationale* as well as the actual operation of government itself. Closely allied to these, were their *independent forms of religion*, which having taught them dissent from ecclesiastical dogmas, and unfettered their minds from an implicit subjection to church authority, begot and fostered an independence of thought and action which was naturally transferred to the ordinary affairs of life, social and political. Then the *system of domestic slavery* in the Southern Colonies, exhibiting in strong relief and by contrast, the advantages and dignity of freedom, enhanced its value to those who possessed it, and made them more jealous and watchful of every attempt at its infringement or subversion. The *prevalence* also in all the Colonies of *legal studies and the legal profession*, arising from the fact, that in their new situation, amid new scenes, under new circumstances, new legal forms and principles and proceedings had to be sought for in the springs and sources of the law itself; "the effect of these studies," to use his own language, "was to teach them to anticipate an evil, and to judge of the pressure of a grievance by the badness of the principle; to augur misgovernment at a distance and snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze." And lastly, a physical as well as a moral cause, was their *remoteness from the central authority* which controlled them, which naturally

weakened the sense of their dependence upon and connection with it, as it also served to impede the comprehension and operation of those measures which it adopted or proposed for their government.

It is by a reference to these influences and events, the introduction and spread of Christianity, the growth of commerce, the progress of knowledge, the discoveries of science, and the concurrence of certain accidental and physical causes, that we can discover the rise and progress of those principles of liberty which distinguished the American colonists,—and under the impulse of which, they were now prepared to stand forth before the world as the champions of Freedom, to enter the lists with despotism and prerogative, and vindicate once and forever the natural and inalienable rights of man. And right well had they been trained for the fierce encounter. The angry frowns of insulted majesty and the paper pellets of a pliant Parliament, though backed by British bayonets or the roar of a British lion, had few terrors for men cradled in the woods of an American forest, whose lullaby was the roar of a cataract, and whose frequent reveille was the wild war-whoop of the Indian savage. Nature had taught them lessons of liberty in all her works—in the breadth of an Ocean and the length of a Continent—in the height of her mountains—the depth of her rivers—the expanse of her lakes. Her inhabitants re-echoed her teachings. The red man walked them with majestic mien in untrodden wilds; the Elk and the Buffalo stamped them over boundless plains; the Eagle screamed them in the Sun. It was not for men thus nurtured, whose ancestors had braved the perils of a tempestuous sea in quest of liberty, and had preferred the free canopy of heaven in the New World, rigorous and wintry as it was, to a comfortable tyranny in the Old,—who had themselves grown up under the tomahawk and the knife, whose nerves had been braced by danger, and whose sinews had been hardened by toil,—it was not for these men now to unwrite the first chapter of American freedom inscribed upon Plymouth-rock, and consign mankind again to the blind and ignorant teachings of bigotry and despotism. But it was no holiday sport in which they were now to be engaged—no Eglintoun tournament this in which

an enervated nobility were to shiver mock lances in view of the blazed dames of a luxurious metropolis. A continent was to be the field of their combat—a world the spectators—and liberty or death the issue.

The fastidiousness of chivalry in its purer days, might have disdained to enter the lists with a Pennsylvania farmer like John Dickinson, or a printer like Benjamin Franklin, or a blacksmith like Nathaniel Greene,—but it was such men as these whom Freedom had selected for her chosen champions, beside whose true nobility of nature, the blood of all the Howards grew muddy and debased.

The days of chivalry had gone by, and now the lust of power and dominion and avarice hurried on an infatuated Parliament in that career of injustice and tyranny which, after eleven years of oppression and insult on the one hand, and reasoning, appeals and remonstrance on the other, lit up the flames of civil war at Lexington and Concord, only to be extinguished by oceans of fratricidal blood poured out upon every plain and mountain from Canada to Georgia—and reddening every stream from the St. Lawrence to the Savannah.

We would not do injustice to the large and glorious theme of the Revolutionary struggle by any attempt to detail the brilliant scenes and events by which it was marked and illustrated—nor outrage your intelligence and patriotism by formally claiming the homage of your admiration for the immortal band of patriots whose sagacity and courage and devotion are now linked with it in an unfading remembrance. This national festival we now observe is the compendium of its history, and their highest and proudest eulogy. The thundering cannon which ushered in this glorious day—the strains of martial music which succeed to the accustomed hum of busy industry—this imposing military and civic procession which calls you off from your ordinary occupations—the victorious standard of the Stars and Stripes floating triumphantly in the free air of an American sky, are themselves eloquent to speak its praise and call up the memory of its soul-inspiring scenes,—the shock at Bunker's Hill, the surprise at Trenton, the camp at Valley Forge, the re-

pulse at Fort Moultrie, the charge at Eutaw and Cowpens, the capitulation at York-Town, and a thousand heroic deeds of individual daring, sacrifice and suffering, not less memorable and illustrious. And it would be an invidious task, if it were an easy one, to say which of the original colonies entered with most zeal and devotion into this fearful and unequal contest; whether the more powerful one of New York, or the smaller one of Rhode Island, or the remote and frontier one of Georgia, rendered the more efficient service in bringing it to a successful conclusion—whether the puritan stock of Massachusetts, or the cavalier descendants of Virginia, or the Huguenot blood of Carolina, breathed the purer or intenser devotion to liberty—and it would be as presumptuous as invidious, to conjecture whether the self-devotion of a Washington, or the political sagacity of a Jefferson, or the stirring eloquence of a Henry, or the martyr blood of a Warren, or the generous sympathy of a Lafayette, or the painful captivity of a Laurens, or the inhuman execution of a Hayne, rose up before heaven, as the more grateful incense from the altars of freedom. It will be no disparagement, however, to the claims of others, to indulge the proud reflection that South Carolina nobly did her duty in this eventful struggle, that in its earliest stage she voted at one time a million of dollars for its support, that at no subsequent period did she withhold either her blood or her treasure, and that the wisdom and gallantry of her Pinckneys and Rutledge and Laurens and Moultrie and Marion and Sumter, both in council and in the field, contributed no mean share to its final and complete success.

But it was not their feats of arms, nor their prowess in the fight, however favorably these may compare with the most brilliant achievements in ancient or in modern times, that demand from us now our highest admiration and gratitude. Animal courage and physical force have been lavished by nature with an unsparing hand at all times and among every people. Even in degenerate Mexico, there are not wanting those who are both bold enough and strong enough to venture upon the hardships and hazards of war—and Quebec and Saratoga bear witness that a traitor Arnold might be brave. But this was the first time in the history

of the world, that a whole people, without passion or prejudice, without violence or revenge, without injustice or fraud, took up arms in defence of an abstract principle of political right, with an intelligent knowledge of their liberties, and the pure and unselfish purpose of transmitting them unimpaired to posterity—rending asunder the ties of nativity, consanguinity and friendship—surrendering ease and property and life in an unequal and doubtful contest with the most powerful nation on the face of the globe—unseduced by her promises, unterrified by her threats,—torn by faction and treason from within, and possessing no well-ordered central government to concentrate their strength and give the greatest momentum to their external resistance—no baronetcies in view, nor pensions, nor coronets, nor princely estates, nor thrones, nor marshall's staves, to tempt their leaders on to such deeds of heroism and glory as a Nelson or a Wellington, a Murat or a Soult, might justly be jealous of—but the punishment of rebels if they failed, and the unenvied privilege, even if successful, of still further laboring and suffering, it might be dying, in the sleepless vigilance to maintain and preserve the liberties they might win—without even the petty emoluments or the usual pomp and circumstance of war which disguise some of its horrors to the common soldier and stimulate him to some degree of military pride and duty, but long gloomy years of poverty, distress and suffering, hunger, cold and nakedness.

The independence of the colonies achieved, and their admission into the great family of nations recognized by the civilized world, the fair fabric of American liberty, as we now behold it, in its pride of place, and all its graceful proportions of strength and beauty, was scarcely yet begun. Religion and commerce, and agriculture, and education, and laws supplied the materials for its erection plentifully at hand; sages and statesmen and patriots were the builders, the right of self government was the corner stone, union the cement, and the cruel calamities of war the august ceremonies with which it was laid. It was a work of hardly less labor and sacrifice and wisdom, now to dispose its abundant materials into their proper relative

position, just reference being had to its own strength and perpetuity on the one hand, and the diversified tastes and wants of its future occupants on the other. But the same benignant influences which inspired and smiled upon its happy conception, now lent their aid in bringing it to a successful completion. Their Provincial legislatures and Continental Congress had given them no small experience, both in the theory and in the art of government; and the Americans had now made the further discovery, that a great political revolution might be accomplished, and a radical change of government be effected, without an entire overthrow of the peace and order of society. The rule of King and Commons had been broken, and yet the stars continued to roll in their accustomed orbits, the sun to shine by day, and the moon to reflect its light by night. Their legislative assemblies convened as usual, in the discharge of their wonted functions, and the people yielded them a cheerful and ready obedience, and they learned that there were better guarantees for government than the bayonet and the block, in the consent and affection of those for whose benefit it was instituted. They needed no nicely graduated scale of suspecting tyranny, to measure the amount of their patriotism, with arbitrary enactments to define the guilt and punishment of treason—and no large standing army to force the blessings of government upon the neck of an unwilling people. Emigrating, as they did, from the same classes of society in the old world, they possessed no artificial advantages over each other, from rank or hereditary privileges; there were no favored classes to depress, no injured ones to appease; no old systems to modify, no obstinate abuses to correct, no violent diseases of the body politic to justify a resort to violent and dangerous remedies—but all was fresh, wholesome and sound, and their political system was at full liberty to strike its roots, and extend its branches in whatever direction the general circumstances of its situation attracted it. The want of natural born legislators, such as illuminate a British house of Lords, imposed upon them all a participation in the cares and honors of government, while their complete identity of interest in all the affairs of government,

along with the circumstance of their dispersion over a considerable extent of country, facilitated and perfected, as they also necessitated an extended suffrage and the representative system. So much for political theories, and the speculations of philosophers; the Utopia of Sir Thomas More, and the perfect commonwealth of Plato—when from such natural and unforeseen circumstances as these, has sprung the most successful form of government the world ever saw—when the weak things of the world have been taken to confound those that are mighty. The equality of all religions in the eye of the law, the largest liberty of speech and of the press, the responsibility of the Representative, and rotation in office, were some of the natural and spontaneous fruits of a popular government. The inherent individual sovereignty of the States, and their complete independence of each other, was another accidental circumstance favorable to the developement of their respective systems of free government. All based upon the same general principles, animated by the same spirit, and looking to the attainment of the same great ends, but each marked by some local difference of religion, custom or prejudice, they held up a mirror to each other to reflect their peculiar features, and exhibit the success of their respective usages and institutions. What was excellent or defective in one, was imitated or avoided by the rest; and they were thus of mutual assistance to each other in running the grand career of self-government, now for the first time fairly opened to mankind. But this circumstance, favorable as it was for the developement of State and individual happiness and liberty, was attended with a corresponding disadvantage, as it regarded the efficiency and vigor of the government for the whole. The advantages of union and a common government, imperfect as these were, had been fully demonstrated in the successful resistance which they had enabled the colonies to oppose to Great Britain in the war of the revolution, and the necessity of their continuance, to enable the States to resist similar aggressions in the future, was now equally obvious—but their extreme jealousy of power, and lively apprehension of its abuse, sharpened by the experience of their re-

cent struggles with the Parliament, made them averse from parting with so much of their State sovereignty and individual liberty, as was necessary to clothe a général government with the requisite powers for accomplishing the great objects for which it was instituted. The external pressure of the war, and a sense of their common danger, had procured for the Continental Congress, both previous to and during the Articles of Confederation, a degree of respect, and an acquiescence with its requisitions upon the States, which its own strength could not command, nor its own powers enforce. As soon as this pressure was removed by the peace, its weakness was revealed to an extent that threatened the loss of all the advantages that had been gained, and the ruin of the States themselves, in the gulf of dissolution and confusion which was yawning before them. And many of the most illustrious patriots of the revolution, who had done and suffered most in the cause of Independence, were, from their very spirit and habit of resistance to prerogative and external authority, now the most reluctant in yielding up any portion of their individual liberty to a central government, deeming the least practicable delegation of power sufficient for national purposes, and safer for the individual rights of the States and the people. But the disrespect and almost utter contempt into which their government was fast falling, both in the eyes of foreign nations and its own citizens, awakened the people at large to the necessity of a stronger government to inspire respect abroad, and promote tranquility and prosperity at home. In this second crisis of danger, not less difficult and alarming than that through which they had already passed, was achieved that glorious Constitution which we now boast as the model of human government; our second act of independence—our second and greater national victory, as the triumphs of reason and justice and kindness over prejudice and jealousy and selfishness are the more difficult and enduring and nobler conquests of the mind and heart.

The angry heats engendered by the Alien and Sedition laws, the Missouri question, and the Protective Tariff, and their fierce conflicts of interest and of passion, shew us

that, perfect as it is in its nice and complex machinery, it demands still, hardly less wisdom and patriotism and sacrifice than gave it existence, now to keep it in equal and successful operation—while the career of honor and power and happiness which has already been ~~seen~~ under its guidance, shews its happy adaptation, under the exercise of these virtues, for accomplishing the great objects for which it was established. *um*

Within the lifetime of a single individual, the old thirteen States have more than doubled their original number. They have a second time hurled back the armies of Great Britain humbled and beaten from their shores, and with an infant navy, disputed her ancient supremacy on the ocean. Their population has swollen from three to twenty millions of people. Their frontier settlements have been pushed from the borders of the Atlantic, far beyond the "Great Father of Waters," while counter currents of American civilization are now setting eastward from the mouth of the Columbia and the shores of the Pacific. Their commerce burdens every sea; their marine constitutes them already the second naval power in the world. Their manufactures crowd those of the most skilful nation out of foreign markets. Their staples regulate the laws of trade. Their agriculture supplies its exuberant breast to the famishing millions of the old world. Their practical science gives laws in engineering to the German and the Russian, and in planting to the East Indian and the Turk. Their literature commands a place in foreign libraries. Their arms strike terror to the obstinate Mexican and wild Cumanche. Their Missionaries bear glad tidings to China and Ethiopia and the islands of the sea. The influence of their institutions wakens up the enslaved masses of Europe to a dawning conception of the natural rights of man. Despotism, at the distance of 3000 miles, trembles on its ancient throne. Among themselves, religion is held in reverence by all classes of men, and all forms of religion enjoy the most complete toleration. The laws are respected and obeyed; justice impartially and speedily administered; crime restrained and punished by a judicious and mild penal code; education diffused and brought within the reach of the

poorest classes of society; labor commanding remunerating prices. A commercial intercourse free and unrestrained as the air they breathe, subsisting between 29 sister sovereignties, with a growing public opinion in favor of free trade in all its channels. A comparatively light system of taxation—an economical form of government—all offices of government open to every individual—peace the established policy of the country—war an unfortunate necessity. Their ports crowded with emigrants, adding wealth and strength and numbers to population: A thousand benevolent schemes for abating the vices and misfortunes of men. Charity with an open hand dispensing aid to every benevolent enterprise at home, and gathering in even the humble contributions of the Indian and the negro, for relief of wretchedness abroad; the humanizing spirit of their institutions mitigating the severities of that domestic institution fastened upon them by the rapacity of England, and constituting now the solitary exception to their universal liberty and equality. And these privileges and blessings promise to be permanent and lasting. The day has gone by when the liberties of a people were in the keeping of a single individual, however wise or honest or powerful, or otherwise worthy he might be of so important and sacred a trust. Knowledge is no longer the monopoly of a few, but the common property of all. Printing is the screw power in politics, holding on to all the experience and teachings of the past, and holding them up as a light and lesson for the future. The easy accumulation and general distribution of property, gives every one an interest, or the hope of an interest, in maintaining the existing order of things. Equality removes every occasion for discontent. The experience and practice and habit of liberty, have made it our second nature. And who can presumptuously assign limits to our growth and extension, other than those which have been fixed by nature herself? The representative form of our government, is compatible with an indefinite extension of territory. The spirit of our constitution makes no distinction in favor of the German or the Pole, over the Mexican or the Spaniard. Steam and the Telegraph cut down the

barriers of time and distance. Every wet English summer or disease of the potatoe, pushes fresh crowds of European emigrants over our land, who, catching the spirit of our institutions as they go, bear them with our own hardy pioneers, onward and westward, where they are soon destined, among the valleys of the Siera Madre and the Rocky Mountains, to raise up new sister States to subdue the wilderness and fertilize the desert, and under the influence of whose example Mexico herself, at no very remote day, worn out with anarchy and bigotry and oppression, may ask to sit down, too, under the broad and Catholic Ægis of the American Constitution.

And if we look around us upon our own continent at the despotism of Russia in her North American possessions, at the restrictive and monarchical government of the Canadas, we will discover that liberty is not a plant indigenous to the American soil, but that its germ was transplanted here in the good providence of God, and that it lived and grew only as it received at our hands a more enlightened and assiduous and devoted attention and culture. These considerations should remind us not only of the value we should set upon it, but of the peculiar duties which devolve upon us in its preservation and perpetuity—that while we admire the self-devotion and exertions of the Revolutionary patriots, and should hold ourselves ready to imitate their example, we should also labor to understand the whole range of those liberties in the achievement of which they acted so conspicuous and glorious a part—and conceive the spirit and promote the operation of those moral causes and physical circumstances which co-operated to crown their labors with such abundant success—that uniting in our efforts for the promotion of the great causes of Christianity and education, the maintenance of law, order and morality, the advancement of knowledge and science, the encouragement of the industrial arts, the accumulation of national and individual wealth, the practice of equality, the cultivation of peace with foreign nations—the exercise of moderation and forbearance in our domestic disputes, the liberal extension of our institutions to others, we may go on in the enjoyment of our present political

happiness, and to the attainment of that political greatness which may not only be hopefully predicted, but arithmetically calculated for our posterity within a century of time, when, spread over a whole continent and numbering a hundred millions of people, speaking the same language, acknowledging the same laws, and worshipping the same God, the great American Confederacy will become the seat and centre of modern civilization and power, dictate laws in legislation and in science to the Eastern world, and present a rare and illustrious and lasting example to mankind of the capacity of a free, virtuous and educated people for the high and sacred duties and privileges of self-government.

We would not, in conclusion, wantonly mar the joy and exultation inspired by this glowing prospect, by the unnecessary introduction of any topic fraught with fear or foreboding for the future. But we would not truthfully fill up the hasty picture of the times, if we omitted to notice the danger, and we confidently believe the only danger which threatens the continuance of our present political happiness, and the integrity and permanence of that system of government under which it is enjoyed. We fear no individual usurpers striding to dictatorial power in the General Government, over broken constitutions and the violated rights of individuals, when so many independent States present so many distinct centres of resistance, and offer so many separate obstacles in the way of his ambition. We fear no servile insurrection while the military force of the Union may be commanded to repress it. We fear no foreign enemies with such a Navy as Perry's on the seas—or such armies as those of Scott and Taylor in the field—but we do fear the legislative tyranny of a jealous, unscrupulous, sectional majority in the halls of Congress—the more to be feared because it is insidious in its approach, seeks to clothe itself in the garb of legal authority, and is veiled under the guise of a devoted attachment to the Union, a lofty veneration for the constitution, and a burning zeal for the rights of man. We do fear that the lust of power, or a greedy avarice, or a fanatical and deluded philanthropy will, ere long, consummate some scheme of sectional tyrann-

ny as oppressive and insulting to us as it will be unauthorized by the constitution, and subversive of the peace and integrity of the Union. Already ~~has~~ a majority in one branch of Congress, and the legislatures of ten non-slaveholding States, declared that all future acquisitions of territory by the United States are to be forever closed against the people of the South and their domestic institutions—that the South are to be excluded from the fruits of every victory won by Southern valor under Southern skill, from Palo Alto to Cerro Gordo—that Buena Vista, though drenched in Southern blood, bears no fruits of victory for us. And this, too, while Southern soldiers, sacrificing the endearments of country, home and friends, are even still perilling their lives to maintain the common glory of our common country under the common standard of the Stars and Stripes—while our own Palmetto boys, under the lead of a gallant son of a Revolutionary sire, are even now wasting by disease in a tropical climate, fall by the assassin stroke of a treacherous and stealthy foe, or court a soldier's death in the din and tumult of battle's wild alarm, and all to vindicate the constancy and faithfulness of the Palmetto banner to abide the issue with the Eagles of the country in an onerous, protracted and sanguinary foreign war.

Fain would we hope, that a returning sense of justice, or a kindly remembrance of the past, or an ominous apprehension of the future, may yet arrest this foul and wicked conspiracy of Northern Politicians, which seeks to degrade us in the social scale, would subject us to an insulting domestic tyranny, strikes at the destruction of our property, tramples upon our glorious constitution, threatens the disruption of our happy Union, darkens all our glowing anticipations of the future, and will, perhaps, blot out forever the very name and hope of free-government from the world.

Dear to us as is the common glory of the past, dear as is the common prosperity of the present, dear as is the sanguine expectation of the future, dear as are Union and the Constitution, dearer still should be that proud heritage of liberty which we have received at the hands of a bleeding ancestry, which is inscribed upon every page of our Revo-

lutionary history, was thundered forth in fire from Charleston to King's mountain, and traced in characters of blood upon every cross-road--from Monk's Corner to Ninety-Six. Nor should we ever forget that the great object of the Revolutionary struggle was not that the Colonies might be united, but that they should be FREE.